Claims

[c1]   1. A restraints control module (RCM) for a vehicle comprising:

a memory device for storing a deployment time of a deployment event; and

a controller electrically coupled to said memory device, said controller

determining when to deploy a restraint and storing said deployment time.

[c2]   2. A module as in claim 1 wherein said controller stores in said memory device a

deployment time comprising at least one of: start time, duration, and end time.

[c3]   1.

[c4]   3. A module as in claim 1 wherein said controller stores in said memory device a

fault time corresponding to said deployment time.

[c5]   1.

[c6]   4. A module as in claim 3 further comprising a comparator electrically coupled

to said controller, said comparator comparing said deployment time with a fault

time and determining whether said fault time corresponds with said deployment

time.

[c7]   1.

[c8]   5. A module as in claim 4 further comprising an indicator electrically coupled to

said controller and indicating when a deployment time corresponds with a fault

time.

[c9]   1.

[c10]   6. A module as in claim 5 wherein said indicator comprises at least one of: a

pulsating indicator, a light bulb, an LED, a fluorescent light, an audible signal, a

visual signal, a 7-segment display, an analog gage, a digital meter, a video

system, and a hazard light.

[c11]   1.

[c12]

7. A module as in claim 1 further comprising an indicator electrically coupled to

said controller, said indicator continuously indicating that the RCM has been on

a vehicle that has been involved in a collision, until such time when the RCM is serviced or replaced.

[c13]   1.

[c14]   8.A module as in claim 1 further comprising an indicator electrically coupled to said controller, said indicator permanently indicating that the RCM has been on a vehicle that has been involved in a collision.

[c15]   1.

[c16]   9.A module as in claim 1 wherein said controller stores in said memory device a restraint power draw value during said deployment event.

[c17]   1.

[c18]   10.A module as in claim 1 wherein information stored in said memory device is uneraseable, unresettable, and unoverwritable.

[c19]   1.

[c20]   11.A module as in claim 1 wherein the controller stores RCM operating time in said stored device.

[c21]   1.

[c22]   12.A restraints control module (RCM) for a vehicle comprising:
an indicator;
a memory device for storing a deployment start time of a deployment event;
a controller electrically coupled to said indicator and said memory device, said controller determining when to deploy a restraint and storing said deployment start time and duration in said memory device;
said controller storing a fault time in said memory device and signaling said indicator when said fault time corresponds to said deployment start time and duration.

[c23]   13.A module as in claim 11 wherein said indicator continuously indicating that the RCM has been on a vehicle that has been involved in a collision.

[c24]   1.

[c25]   14.A module as in claim 11 further comprising a comparator electrically coupled
             to said controller, said comparator comparing said deployment time with a fault
             time and determining whether said fault time corresponds with said deployment
             time.

[c26]   1.

[c27]   15.A module as in claim 11 wherein information stored in said memory device is
             uneraseable, unresettable, and unoverwritable.

[c28]   1.

[c29]   16.A method of time stamping and indicating a deployment event within an
             automotive vehicle having a RCM, said method comprising:
             sensing a collision;
             generating a collision signal in response to said collision;
             deploying a restraint in response to said collision signal; and
             storing a deployment time.

[c30]   17.A method as in claim 15 wherein storing a deployment time comprises
             storing a deployment time comprising at least one of: start time, duration, and
             end time.   .   .

[c31]   1.

[c32]   18.A method as in claim 15 further comprising indicating whether the RCM has
             been on a vehicle that has been involved in a collision.

[c33]   1.

[c34]   19.A method as in claim 15 further comprising storing a fault time.

[c35]   1.

[c36]   20.A method as in claim 19 further comprising indicating when said deployment
             time corresponds with said fault time.

[c37]   1.

[c38]   21.A method as in claim 19 further comprising indicating cause of said fault
          time.

[c39]   1.

[c40]   22.A method as in claim 15 further comprising storing restraint power draw
          during the deployment event.

[c41]   23.A method as in claim 15 further comprising continuously indicating a fault in
          response to the deployment event.